

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, XT, XZ, FI

SUBJECT: FINNISH VIEWS ON ETUC

1. FINNISH TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (SAK) INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY KARI TAPIOLA CONFESSED FRUSTRATION OVER CURRENT SITUATION IN EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) IN TALK WITH EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE.

TAPIOLA CONFIRMED THAT DENMARK'S THOMAS NIELSEN AND BELGIUM'S GEORGES DEBUNNE ARE NOW THE TWO PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES FOR ETUC PRESIDENCY. THIS PUTS FINNS AND SWEDES ON HORNS OF DILEMMA. THEY PREFER DEBUNNE BUT ARE RELUCTANT TO BREAK TRADITIONAL NORDIC SOLIDARITY BY VOTING AGAINST NIELSEN. IN RETURN FOR SUPPORTING NIELSEN, HOWEVER, THEY WANT GUARANTEE HE WILL BE GUIDED BY SCANDINAVIAN CONSENSUS AND NOT

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REGARD ELECTION AS MANDATE TO PURSUE HIS PERSONAL

(I.E., EEC-ORIENTED) VIEWS. NIELSEN WILL BE LOOKING FOR FIRM COMMITMENTS TO HIS CANDIDACY, AND THEREFORE MAY BE WILLING TO GIVE SUCH ASSURANCES TO OTHER SCANS, SINCE HE WILL ONLY STAND FOR ETUC PRESIDENCY IN HIS HOME TOWN IF HE IS CERTAIN OF VICTORY. TAPIOLA IMPLIED THAT NEW CHRISTIAN MEMBERS OF ETUC MAY HOLD SWING VOTE IN NIELSEN-DEBUNNE CONTEST.

2. SAME DILEMMA APPLIES IN ELECTION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL. TAPIOLA ADMITTED DENMARK'S PEER CARLSEN WAS ONLY APPARENT CANDIDATE BUT THAT CONSEQUENT EEC MONOPOLY OF EXECUTIVE POSITIONS IN ETUC WOULD HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS AMONG MEMBERS FROM NON-EEC COUNTRIES. THE AUSTRIANS AND SWISS ARE AS DISTURBED AT THIS PROSPECT AS THE SWEDES AND FINNS ACCORDING TO TAPIOLA. THIS GROUP HAS NO ALTERNATIVE CANDIDATE (TAPIOLA HIMSELF IS "NOT YET READY TO LEAVE HELSINKI" AND HAS SO TOLD CARLSEN WHO SUSPECTS HIM OF WANTING THE JOB). IT IS LIKELY THEREFORE THEY WILL ACCEDE RELUCTANTLY TO CARLSEN'S SELECTION. ONE RESULT WILL BE, HOWEVER, THAT THE NORWEGIANS, SWEDES AND FINNS WILL INCREASINGLY LOOK TO THE NORDIC TRADE UNION COUNCIL (NTUC) AS VEHICLE FOR THEIR ENERGIES AND INFLUENCE. TAPIOLA DOES NOT SEE THE DANES SPLITTING OFF FROM THE NTUC BUT STRAINS WILL INEVITABLY INCREASE. KREHBIEL

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